the time of Independence. In 1949, the projected strength of the Territorial Army alone was 1.3 lakhs. Over the years, the territorial equivalents of the Navy and Air Force have ceased to exist and some of the Territorial Army units have been converted to regular army units. The current strength of the Territorial Army stands at 32,200 personnel.

(c) The role and function of Territorial Army, in 1951, included: (i) relieve the regular army of static duties; (ii) provide coastal defence and anti-aircraft units; (iii) provide field formations and units for the regular army, as and when required.

These functions have undergone certain modifications over the years to suit the changinng internal and external security environment. The present functions of the force include carrying out static security duties, internal security duties and aid to civil authorities, as and when required.

Paltry Rent being paid by united services club, Mumbai

2447. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY:
SHRI. C.P. THIRUNAVUKKARASU:
SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the United Services Club, Mumbai functioning on commercial lines is operating from defence land at a paltry annual rent of Rs. 0.36 lakh;

(b) if so, whether the Directorate of Defence Estate has assessed the value of the land at Rs. 55.00 crore and the annual rental at Rs. 2.73 crore, in 1998;

(c) whether the club is occupying defence land without Government sanction; and

(d) if so, steps being taken to evict the occupants and enforce revised rental tariff with retrospective effect?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The Army authorities have informed that the

United Services Club is not functioning on commercial lines at present.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Question does not arise.

Acquiring Hi-Tech Weapon System For Defence Forces

2448. SHRI DINA NATH MISHRA:
SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the process of procuring defence related hi-tech weapons has suffered a setback due to extrenous reasons resulting in lack of very essential items needed for combating terrorism;

(b) if so, the present position of acquiring better quality of AK-47 rifles, electronic sensors etc. especially in light of demand by the Indian Army and para-military forces for equipping them better; and

(c) the present status of acquiring T-90 tanks, smerch artillery systems and upgrading 133 mm artillery guns to 155 mm and weapons locating radars?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No Sir. Procurement of defence related hi-tech weapons is a continuous and on-going process keeping in view the essential requirements.

(b) and (c) In view of the sensitive nature of the information, it is not in the interest of national security to disclose the details.

Acquisition of AWACS

†2449. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI DEVI PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.